FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECURITY: UNCLASSIFIED PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

TO: Department of State

FROM: LAGOS 75 August 10, 1950

REF: CONDES 44, July 20, 1950

SUBJECT: Political and Economic Events in Nigeria for the Two-week Period Ending July 29, 1950.

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As usual this despatch supplements the various despatches and telegrams during the two-week period under review on special subjects. Its delay in preparation is due to the Consul General's absence on an official trip to the Gold Coast (Consulate General's telegrams Nos. 18 of July 29, 1950 and 24 of August 5, 1950).

POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Governor Visits North

The Governor of Nigeria (Sir John MACPHERSON) after returning from the trip in the southwestern part of Nigeria mentioned in despatch No. 44 of July 20, 1950 went out on a trip to the northern zone. Local press comment was much the same as that on his previous trip.

Proposed Nigerian Constitution

The local press has generally welcomed the despatch from the Colonial Secretary with regard to the new Constitution for Nigeria (reference despatch No. 57 of July 28, 1950). Even the Nationalists have supported it in principle apparently on the premise that three quarters of a loaf is better than none. Naturally they, including particularly the more extreme Left-Wing editors, have claimed it as a victorious step forward for them which of course it is.

Expert Drowned

Alex SKELTON, the Canadian expert serving on the Commission of Inquiry into the problem of allocation of revenues between the Central and Regional Governments in Nigeria (reference despatch No. 294 dated June 26, 1950) was drowned in a yachting accident in Lagos on July 21, 1950. The loss of Mr. Skelton was mourned by all those who met him. However, the Commission is still functioning and it is expected that its report will be available soon.

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Visit of Delta Line Representative

Mr. Jacques RAUX-DELEDICQUE, an Argentine representing the

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Delta Line (Mississippi Shipping Company, Inc. of New Orleans) called with regard to the feeder service being established by the Line. It has chartered a small vessel (the Norwegian M.V. Kong Dag of 1970 deadweight tons) to handle cargo for its larger vessels. The Kong Dag is expected to run between the Ivory Coast and French Equatorial Africa touching at the British West African ports to discharge cargo from American Gulf Ports for minor West African areas and to pick up West African export cargo for loading in the major ports in this region for shipment to the United States. The Delta Line expects to run its main vessels approximately on the route New Orleans - Dakar - Monrovia - Matadi - Lobito - Luanda - Lagos - Takoradi - Monrovia - New Orleans, subject to cargo, with one ship every three weeks. The first, the American Del Rio, is expected to arrive in Lagos shortly.

Labour Inquiry Continuing

The Labour Commission which is looking into labor policy following the Enugu Incident (reference despatch No. 294 of June 26, 1950) is working in the interior of Nigeria and has not made any report yet.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Visit of American Representing Carnegie Foundation and also ECA

Whitney H. SHEPARDSON, who is Director of the British Dominions and Colonial Fund of the Carnegie Foundation, visited Lagos during this period and then returned to the North. He is due back in Lagos August 10th and is accompanied by Mrs. Shepardson. They will stay at the Consul General's residence on the 10th and 11th and then stay with the Governor until they depart for Accra on August 14th. Mr. Shepardson is also Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Overseas Territories of the Economic Cooperation Administration while he is interested in CASNA (Committee for African Students in North America) and in the Fullbright Study Program. The Consulate General made arrangements for him to see the Acting Chief Secretary, the Director of Education and the Director of Economic Development among others while on his first visit and he will be seeing the Governor and the Chief Secretary (Mr. H. M. FOOT who has just returned from the United Kingdom and the United States) on his second. The Carnegie Foundation is endeavoring to grant limited assistance to certain projects in Nigeria, including perhaps some aid for the University College at Ibadan and the possibility of financing a visit by the head of the Veterinary School in this country to the United States to study American practice.

Baptist Centennial

The Reverend George W. SADLER, Secretary for Africa, Europe, and Near East of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Richmond, Virginia, called at the Consulate General with regard to the celebration of the Centennial of Baptist work in Nigeria to be held by the American Baptist Mission at Abeokuta,

some sixty miles north of Lagos on August 19, 1950. Many American mission representatives will attend, including some coming directly from the United States. This celebration is particularly noteworthy because it commemorates the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the first Mission in the interior of the country when a brave American representing the Southern Baptists opened a station. The Governor has invited the Consul General to accompany him to the celebration.

Visit of American Students' Representative

William E. STRASBURG, representative of the National Students' Association of the United States, spent several days in Lagos and at the University College, Ibadan, contacting students and their associations for the purpose of obtaining information on student government, club functions, sports, and general extracurricular activities. Mr. Strasburg's interest was primarily in connection with the University. However, because the University is closed at this time of the year, he found it necessary to spend most of his time among secondary groups and arranged to leave Lagos for the Gold Coast after July 29th.

Willard Quincy Stanton
American Consul General

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